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AUTHOR:

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TITLE:

ETHICAL IDEAL OF
RENUNCIATION...

PLACE:

[SOMERVILLE, N.J.]

DATE:

[1915]

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Culp, Cordie Jacob, 1872-

The ethical ideal of renunciation ... by Cordie Jacob Culp ... [Somerville, N. J., The Union-gazette association, 1915]

57 p. 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Thesis (Ph. D.)—New York university, 1914.
Bibliography: p. 56-57.

Volume of pamphlets.

1. Ethics. 1. Title: Renunciation, The ethical ideal of.

Library of Congress
New York Univ. Libr.

BJ1491.C8
3780
34b1

15-16160

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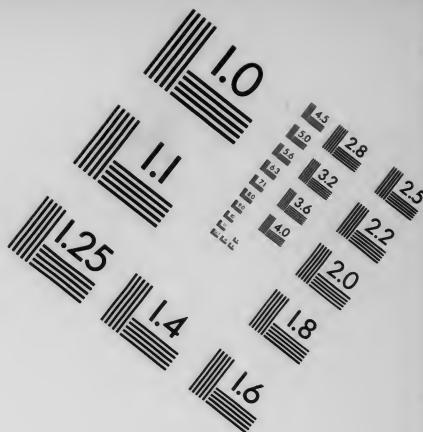
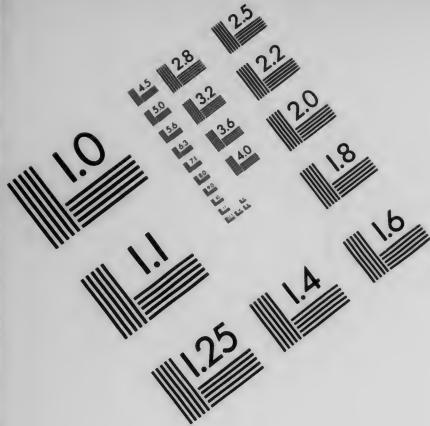


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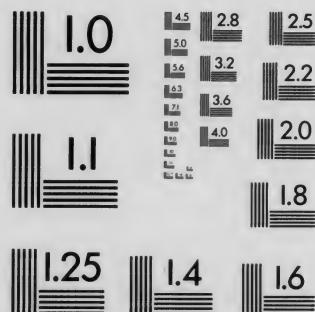
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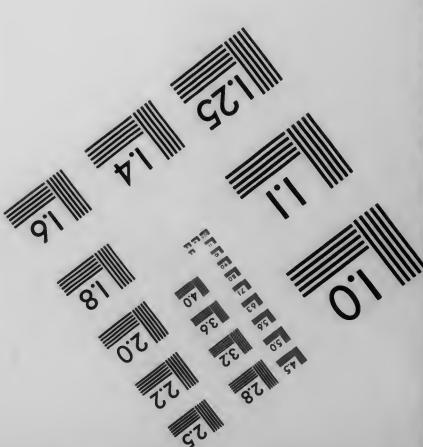
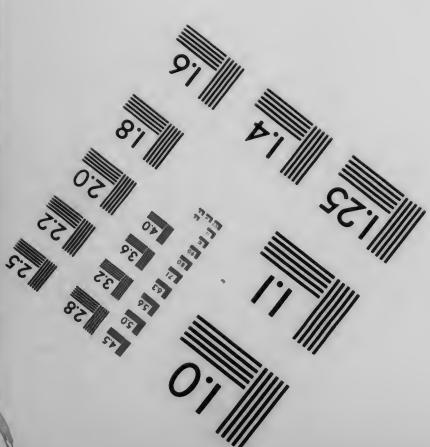
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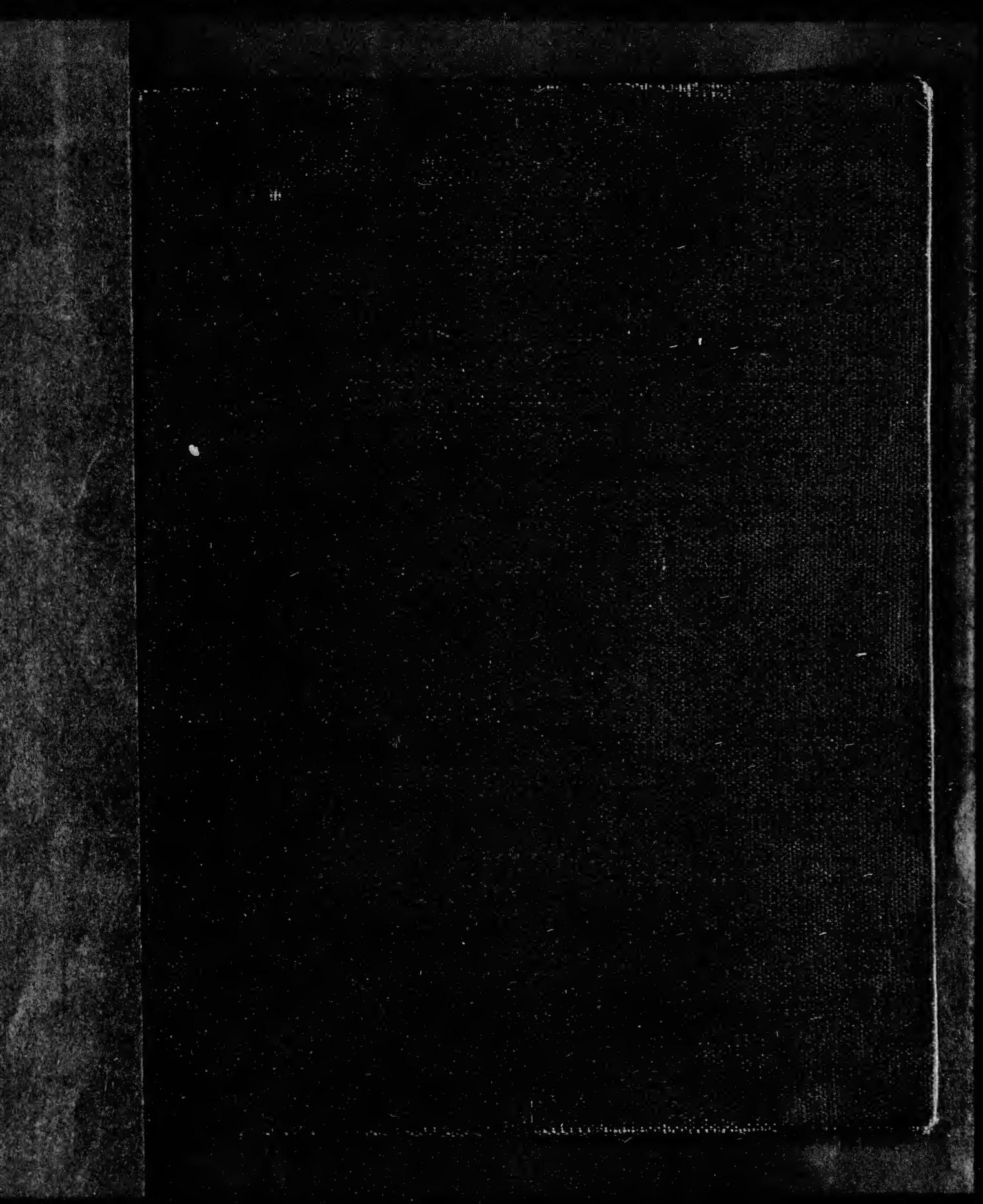


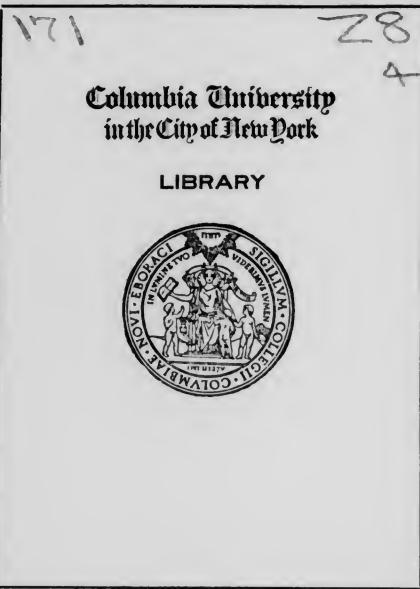
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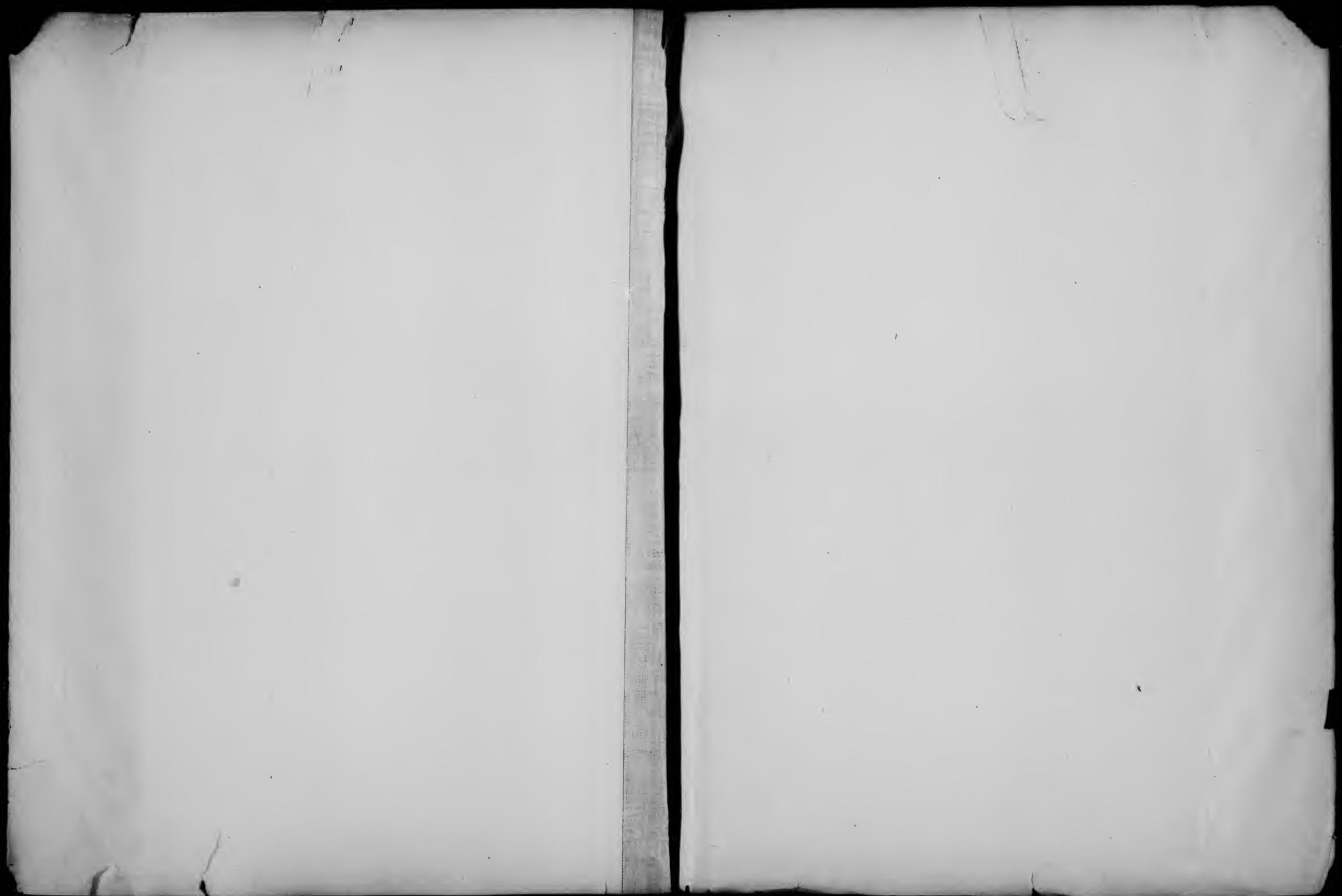


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Contents.

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1914.
2. Tomkins, D. B. The individual and society, 1914
3. Zeigler, Theobald. Die anfänge einer wissen-
schaftlichen ethik bei den Griechen. 1879.
4. Wehrenpennig, W. Die verschiedenheit der ethis-
chen prinzipien bei den Hellenen und ihre
erklärungsgründe. 1856.

no. 1

THE ETHICAL IDEAL OF RENUNCIATION

A THESIS

BY

CORDIE JACOB CULP, M. A.

Accepted by the Graduate School of New York University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

1914

To
F. B. C.
COMPANION, ADVISER, HELPER
THIS MONOGRAPH IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

CONTENTS

	PAGES
I. INTRODUCTION :—The Nature of the Ethical Problem	7-8
1. <i>The Older View</i> : Life as enjoyment, Epicurean. Life as obligation, Stoic. Consequent dualism. Hedonism and Rationalism. The search after a reconciling principle.....	7
2. <i>The Newer View</i> : Life as realization, Aesthetics. Life as renunciation, Religion. Eudae-monism and Rigorism. Life in its unity. The aim of this thesis.....	7-8
II. RENUNCIATION IN ITS HISTORICAL Development	8-46
A. <i>Orientalism</i> .	
1. Taoism: The speculative principle of the Tao, nihilistic. The ethical principle of the Teh, doing nothing. Non-resentment and non-resistance	8-11
2. Yogaism: Compared with Taoism. The Universal Self. The practical principle of worklessness. The basis for non-resentment and non-resistance	11-14
3. Buddhism: Compared with Taoism and Yogaism. The Buddhistic motive. Annihilation of desire. Nirvanism.....	14-16
4. Christianity: Compared with other forms of orientalism. Teaching of Jesus, self-denial and self-hatred. Teaching of St. Paul, invalidity of good works. Transition of Christianity to the Occident. Conflict with Pagan-	
	(3)

Contents

	PAGES
ism. Augustine. "Via negativa" Renaissance and the Reformation. The rise of Rationalism	16-23
B. Modernity:—The Rationalistic Withdrawal from Nature.	
1. The problem of Descartes: The dualism of mind and matter. Interaction of body and mind	23-24
2. Occasionalism: Geulincx: Virtue "Amor Dei ac Rationis." "Inspectio sui" "Despectio sui" "Contemptio sui." Malebranche. Seeing in God. Loving God. Spinoza and Occasionalism, "Amor intellectualis Dei" Pascal, contempt of reason. Exaltation of will.....	24-31
C. Revival of Renunciation in the 19th Century.	
1. Schopenhauer: The World as Will and Idea, The Will-to-live. Life as evil. Denial of The Will-to-live. Pessimism of Bahnsen. The contention of Frauenstädt.....	32-37
2. Hartmann: Compared with Schopenhauer. Will unconscious but intelligent. Affirmation of the Will-to-live. Final annihilation of the will	37-38
3. Wagner: The superman. Nirvanism of Wotan in "The Ring" The "Black flag" of Tristan and Isolde. Parsifal.....	38-40
4. Ibsen: <i>Brand</i> , "All or none." <i>Peer Gynt</i> , "Barrel of self." <i>Emperor and Galilean</i> , "Thou hast conquered." <i>Rosmersholm</i> , "The Rosmer view of life".....	40-41
5. Russian Submission and Sympathism: Tolstoi, doctrine of non-resistance. Dostoeffsky, egoism and repentance	41-43
6. Opposition to renunciation. Sudermann, individualism and immoralism. Repudiation of	

Contents

	PAGES
moral standards. Nietzsche, Will-to-power. Superman. Ascetic ideals. Contempt for Christianity	43-46
III. RENUNCIATION AS AN ETHICAL IDEAL	46-55
A. Negative.	
1. Life can not contain nor content man: Peristency and universality of renunciatory ideals. The <i>lack</i> in human life. Nature and spirit	46-50
2. The spiritual nature of man: No place in nature. The historical negation of nature. The problem of self-hood.....	49-50
B. Positive.	
1. Renunciation as the path to spiritual life. The <i>more</i> in human life. Man's critical attitude toward the world. The affirmation of the self	50-51
2. Self-realization through renunciation: The self and nature. Subdual of the world of sense. Renunciation as conceived by Russian thought and Christianity. Metaphysical and moral grounds. A valid ideal for completeness of life. The home and the work of the self	51-55
BIBLIOGRAPHY	56-57

I. INTRODUCTION.

The problem of renunciation arises in connection with the newer and more profound conception of the moral life, as it has been developed by modern writers. According to the traditional view, the ethical decision and moral choice had to do with one or other of the peculiar functions of consciousness, as feeling or intellect, sensibility or reason. Thus arose the dualism which occasioned the sharp conflict between Epicureanism and Stoicism, the ideal of the former being the enjoyment of life, while the latter made life a matter of obligation. This dualism persisted in modern thinking in the form of Hedonism on the one hand and Rationalism on the other with a constant conflict which served in time to reveal the inadequacy of either conception to meet the ethical demands of humanity. Hedonism possessed material and content in sensibility but lacked form and a regulating principle, while Rationalism had the form and regulating principle but lacked material and content. Consequently there was a search for a reconciling principle which would recognize the rights of both Hedonism and Rationalism. This search resulted in the conclusion that life must be conceived as an unit which took the form of Eudaemonism, where self-realization through the aesthetical impulse was the ideal, or Rigorism, where the religious influence was paramount. Both views apprehended life as a whole but where Eudaemonism counselled man to accept life, Rigorism demanded that he reject it. Therefore, the distinction which now obtains in the moral field, instead of forcing the ethical subject to choose between separate functions of consciousness, man is called upon to regard his life as an unity and upon this basis to either assert his life as a whole or deny it. Thus arises our problem of renunciation. For its proper consideration as an ethical ideal, its place in human thought and

the forms in which it appears, it is necessary that this thesis be historical and expository with some critical estimate of renunciation as a problem in human life.

II. RENUNCIATION IN ITS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT.

Following the superior conception of ethics as something concerned with life as a whole, there arises the necessity of exploring the whole field of historical ethical inquiry, so that instead of beginning with Socrates or Hobbes, we must consider the earlier forms of morality as these are found in the oriental world. For this reason it is expedient that we examine the subject of renunciation as it appears in Taoism, Yogaism, Buddhism and Christianity as well as the various forms of occidental thinking. With Taoism and Yogaism, the problem concerns itself with activity. Each system agreeing that all action must be repudiated, the one ending in nihilism and the other in worklessness. Buddhism and Christianity are ethical where Taoism and Yogaism are more metaphysical. These have their seat in the spiritual life of man and when they counsel their disciples to renounce the world, the result of Buddhism is a pessimism of a weak and negative sort, while with Christianity, it is a pessimism of a stronger and more positive character. In all four of these systems, renunciation is paramount.

A. ORIENTALISM.

1. Both in point of time and development, Taoism offers a fitting field for the beginning of our historical inquiry as to the subject of renunciation. This early form of Mongolian thought is naive, naturalistic and individualistic. It finds its most perfect expression in the writings of Laotze, known as the Tao-Teh-King, a paradoxical and unsystematical treatise on metaphysics and ethics. The Tao is the speculative principle and the Teh the practical principle, with no clear distinctions between them. The Tao is analogous to the Greek principle of the *λόγος* or the *natura*

naturans of Bruno and Spinoza. Laotze speaks of it thus: "There is something undefined and complete, coming into existence before Heaven and Earth. How still it was and formless, standing alone, and undergoing no change, reaching everywhere and in no danger (of being exhausted)! It may be regarded as the Mother of all things. I do not know its name, and I give it the designation of the Tao."¹ He further declares that "It might appear to have been before God."² A further examination of the Taoistic principle indicates that its real nature is nihilistic. In fact Laotze anticipates the Hegelian notion that pure being is equivalent to nothing. He says "The Tao is like the emptiness of a vessel."³ It is also likened to the space for the axle in the hub of a wheel or to the openings for windows and doors in the walls of a house.⁴ The Tao is nihilistic in its operations. It is impalpable. It eludes the senses. It is the equable, the inaudible and the subtle.⁵ In its method of procedure, the Tao moves by contraries:

"The movement of the Tao
By contraries proceeds;
And weakness marks the course
Of Tao's mighty deeds."⁶

Its existence is non-existence, its fullness is emptiness, its brightness is darkness and its progress is retrogression.⁷ Such paradoxical illustrations as these serve to show the nihilism which lies at the heart of the system, the most definite assertion of which occurs in the 37th chapter of the first part of the Tao-Teh-King where Laotze declares: "The Tao in its regular course does nothing and so there is nothing which it can not do."

Turning to the Teh, the ethical principle of the system, we are met with the assertion that "Man takes his law from the earth; the earth takes its law from heaven; heaven takes

1. Tao-Teh-King, tr. Legge, pt. I, ch. 25.
2. Ib., ch. 4.
3. Ib., ch. 4, sec. I.
4. Ib., ch. II.
5. Ib., ch. 14.
6. Ib., pt. II, ch. 40.
7. Ib., pt. I, ch. 21.

its law from the Tao."¹ Therefore, the law of man's life is a form of quiescence which has its root in the metaphysical nihilism of Taoism. Many and various are the ways in which this quiescent state is portrayed. The man of Tao is declared to be "Vacant like a valley and dull like muddy water."² Water is a favorite emblem of Laotze for both the Teh and the Tao: "There is nothing in the world more soft and weak than water and yet for attacking things that are firm and strong there is nothing that can take precedence of it;—for there is nothing (so effectual) for which it can be changed."³ It is the yielding character, stillness and apparent weakness of water which make it such an attractive figure for the way of human conduct.⁴ The ideal state for humanity is one of listlessness and stillness where all desire ceases to exist. Man must be "Like an infant which has not smiled."⁵ To attain to this ideal of "doing nothing" is man's most sublime achievement and greatest enjoyment. Kwang-sze says: "I consider doing nothing to be the greatest enjoyment."⁶ Laotze in portraying this ideal is careful to point out the road for its attainment which is the renunciation of all forms of activity, whether of the inner or the outer life of man. He must constantly diminish his doing until "He arrives at doing nothing."⁷ All desire must be stilled until it absolutely ceases.⁸ All human wisdom, benevolence, righteousness and learning must be renounced.⁹ By following such a path man will discover the principle of all successful government, solve all social problems and free society from all disorder.¹⁰ Thus the real Utopia, ac-

1. Tao-Teh-King, pt. I, ch. 25.

2. Ib., 15.

3. Ib., pt. II, ch. 78.

4. Ib., pt. I, ch. 8; pt. II, ch. 66 et al.

5. Ib., pt. I, ch. 20.

6. Writings of Kwang-sze, tr. Legge, Bk. 18.

7. Tao-Teh-ing, pt. II, ch. 48.

8. Ib., ch. 1.

9. Ib., ch. 19.

10. Ib., pt. I, ch. 3; pt. II, ch. 57.

cording to the Taoistic system is the "Land of the great vacuity" where after the manner of Heaven and Earth, man sinks into the state where

"With no desire, at rest and still
All things go right as of their will."

In Taoism, renunciation also appears in the forms of non-resentment and non-resistance. It is said of the Taoistic sage: "Because he does not strive, no one finds it possible to strive with him."¹ Speaking of war the sage declares: "I do not dare to advance an inch; I prefer to retire a foot."² Non-resentment is counselled even more definitely. The sage makes the mind of the people his mind and declares: "To those who are good to me, I am good; and to those who are not good to me, I am also good."³ The teachings of Jesus and Tolstoi are anticipated in the unexpected declaration: "It is the way of the Tao to recompense injury with kindness."⁴ The foundation of non-resistance and non-resentment lies also in the nihilism of the system of Taoism with its symbols of emptiness and non-action. If nothing exists and nothing needs to be done, naturally all reaction on the part of humanity is not only out of place but entirely useless. Renunciation, as the life ideal of Taoism, can not permit activity even under the forms of non-resistance and non-resentment. To the thorough-going Taoist, man's ordinary life is valueless and to be negated as completely as the nihilism of the system negates the world.

2. The doctrine of Yogaism while agreeing with Taoism in counselling non-activity as an ideal for human life, differs from that system in being more intellectual but scarcely more systematic. Where Taoism investigated nature and found it empty, the Yoga affirms the absolute self in opposition to the external world, therefore, the Yoga has a more sub-

1. Tao-Teh-King, pt. I, ch. 37.

2. Tao-Teh-King, pt. II, ch. 66.

3. Ib., ch. 69.

4. Ib., ch. 49.

5. Ib., ch. 63

stantial metaphysics and while repudiating action, its form of renunciation is of a higher and more logical nature than that of Mongolian thought. The speculative basis for the Yoga doctrine is the Brahman or universal self of the Vedanta philosophy, the Yoga being the practical aspect which finds its clearest expression in the Bhagavadgita. Where the Vedanta counsels the ideal of contemplation, the Yoga of renunciation proceeds to realize the ideal, hence its concern has to do with the emancipation of the individual self from the delusion of the immediate and external and the junction with the Absolute Self which is declared to be the "Brahmic Bliss."¹ The Yoga is closely related to the Sankya doctrine of knowledge as the path to the "Brahma-nirvana." In fact they are declared to be one and the same; "He sees truly" says Deity, "who sees Sankya and Yoga as one."² According to the Sankya, the path of knowledge is secured by renunciation in the form of a thorough-going asceticism. (The Hatha Yoga), and by the mortification of all desires and the absolute abandonment of all action, (The Raja Yoga), until the mind attains to a state of undisturbed meditation.³ The renunciation required by the Sankya doctrine, so far as it pertains to activity, is as nihilistic as that of Taoism. However, in the Yoga, renunciation has to do with the purpose and the motive of activity, rather than with activity itself, thus yielding a kind of worklessness, in which man repudiates all desire, ends and fruits of action.⁴ The Yoga recognizes a practical difficulty which seems to be entirely ignored by Taoism and the Sankya and declares that "A man does not attain freedom from action merely by not engaging in action, for nobody ever remains even for an instant without performing some action." Therefore, the Yoga counsels: "Action is better than inaction."⁵ In this the Sankya doctrine is not so much repudiated by the Bhagavadgita as it is

1. Bhagavadgita, tr., Telang, ch. 2.

2. Ib., ch. 5.

3. Ib., ch. 2.

4. Ib., ch. 3.

5. Ib., ch. 3.

considered inferior. Deity says: "There is a two-fold path, that of the Sankyas by devotion in the shape of true knowledge; and that of the Yogins by devotion in the shape of action,"¹ however, Deity further says: "But of the two, pursuit of action is superior to the renunciation of action."² It is quite evident, therefore, that the renunciation of the Yoga passes from that of action itself to the motive for action and thus reduces the ethical subject to a position where the rule of work is the absence of all expectation of reward and the complete detachment of all desire from activity, or as Deity declares: "I will speak to you about action, and learning that, you will be freed from this world of evil. He is wise among men who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction. For-saking all detachment to the fruit of action, always contented, dependent on none, he does nothing at all, though he engage in action."³ The principle underlying this ideal of worklessness is that life itself must be one great act of renunciation by which the whole is dedicated to Brahman. To Arguna's plea for direction in attaining the highest good, Deity answers by saying: "Dedicating all actions to me with a mind knowing the relation of the supreme and individual self."⁴ In chapter five of the same work, Arguna is troubled with what seems to be a confusion between renunciation and the pursuit of action, to which Deity replies: "He, who casting off all attachment, performs actions dedicating them to Brahman, is not tainted by sin, as the lotus-leaf is not tainted by water." We have in this form of Hindoo thinking a world abandonment as a life ideal which is attained by renunciation in the form of worklessness. This, however, is not the only form in which renunciation appears in the Yoga doctrine. As in Taoism, non-resentment and non-resistance are definitely advocated but upon different grounds. If in the Taoistic system, resentment and resistance must be renounced because they are useless, in the Yoga they must be

1. Bhagavadgita, ch. 3.

2. Ib., ch. 5.

3. Ib., ch. 4.

4. Ib., ch. 3.

abandoned because they are injurious to the individual and serve only to frustrate his attainment of Brahmic bliss. While the Bhagavadgita does not draw any such direct conclusion, any consistency between its speculative and practical principles, demands that non-resentment and non-resistance be fundamental to a system where the Universal Self is all and the individual self can only say, *aham brahma asmi!* "I am Brahman." Deity not only claims to be the source of forgiveness¹ but demands it of the Yogni: "That devotee of mine, who hates no being, who is friendly and compassionate, who is forgiving, is dear to me." And again: "He who is alike to friend and foe, as also in honor and dishonor, who is alike in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, who is free from attachments, to whom praise and blame are alike, is dear to me."² While the Bhagavadgita thus promulgates a more active form of negation than Taoism by its Yoga of renunciation, it makes man distrustful of existence and destroys his sense of selfhood by taking from him the consciousness of individuality and all desire for personal action. However, such an ideal goes counter to man's native sense of selfhood. Man is not content to believe that he has no business to exist or that he has no value in the world. It is not strange, therefore, that over against the negation of the individual personality of the Vedanta with its practical Yoga of renunciation, there arises a reaction in which the self becomes positive and while not possessing satisfactory value, its real problems are recognized and dealt with in the positive fashion of Buddhism and Christianity.

3. In Buddhism the Universal Self of the Yoga becomes the subjective self of the individual. The metaphysical principle of the Tao and Yoga practically disappears and in its place, the individual alone exists. Ethics becomes everything and the self the center of all problems. If the Yoga found something wrong with the individual, Buddhism finds everything wrong with the individual life and catching up the weapon of renunciation it wields it with more deadly power than

1. Bhagavadgita, ch. 10.
2. Bhagavadgita, ch. 12.

either Taoism or the Yoga. Where they were content with negation and inactivity, Buddhism must secure the complete annihilation of the individual self and thereby of all things. Further Buddhism differs from these older negative forms of thought in seeking the final redemption of man. The nihilism of Taoism and the worklessness of Yogaism are only temporary measures which will not satisfy the Buddhist. Human life is too painful, sorrowful and elusive; evil too persistent, the rebirth of the soul too terrible, for any thing to be sought but the complete extinguishment of the spark of the soul as "Fire goes out for want of grass." The motive for Buddhistic renunciation is purely pessimistic. "Birth, decay, death, the unpleasant and unsatisfied craving, are all painful," but these are the condition of the existence of the individual.¹ To escape this suffering, it is necessary to destroy its root which is the *desire* for the gratification of passion, for future life and for success in the present life.² This craving or desire is overcome by means of a series of renunciatory acts summed up in the "Eight fold path." By this path the chain of causation, so fundamental to the Buddhistic system, is counteracted and finally overcome. When this chain is broken, man is free from the earthly bonds and from the re-birth of the soul and attains to the desired end of Nirvana or extinction which is likened to the blowing out of a candle. Buddhism in marshalling its forces against desire, attacks the very stronghold of the life of man and in reality seeks to save him by destroying him. This paradoxical procedure is not all concealed but rather set forth in the spirit of exultation. It is recorded in the "Book of the Great Decease" that when the Blessed One "Deliberately and consciously rejected the rest of his allotted life" he broke out in this hymn of rejoicing:

"His sum of life the sage renounced,
The Cause of life immeasurable or small;
With inward joy and calm, he broke,
Like a coat of mail, his life's own cause."³

1. Ppanattana Sutta, sec. 5.
2. Ib., secs. 6, 7, 8.
3. Ib., ch. 3:10.

This breaking of the cause of life is the attainment of Nirvana which is not annihilation but a living Arahatsip, a condition of human existence where the fires of lust, hatred and delusion have gone out by a process of contemplation and asceticism combined. The Arahat has reached Nirvana but continues to live in a state of bliss, like the "Gods who feed on happiness."¹ In this state the seeds of existence are destroyed, desire and the sense of individuality are no more and like a dying lamp, the Arahat gradually flickers out of existence into complete and absolute annihilation.² Like Taoism and Yogaism, Buddhism counsels non-resentment and non-resistance but upon a more practical basis, in fact they are the natural corollaries of the system. To practice resentment or resistance only adds to the strife and pain of life from which it is the whole end of man to escape. "Angry speech is painful, blows for blows will touch" says the *Dhammapada*.³ The teachings of Jesus are anticipated by the declaration that "Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: Hatred ceases by love."⁴ The Path to Nirvana is further described as one where anger is overcome by love, evil by good, the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth and where no one is injured by another.⁵ Buddhistic renunciation is thorough-going in all its aspects. Its foundation is laid deeply in the weakest sort of pessimism. If Taoism can find neither a home nor a work for man and the Yoga robs him of all purpose and motive, Buddhism finds his life altogether evil with no hope but utter extinction and annihilation.

4. Christianity, the last form of orientalism to be considered in this historical survey, like the systems already reviewed, has a passion for renunciation but in other respects it differs very fundamentally from these systems. Where both Mongolian and Indian thought make light of the in-

1. *Dhammapada*, secs. 197-200.

2. *Rattana Sutta*, sec. 14.

3. Sec. 133.

4. *Ib.*, sec. 5.

5. *Ib.*, secs. 223-225.

dividual and depreciate his worth, Christianity literally discovers the individual and posits the soul over against the world. It repudiates the nihilism of the Tao, the pantheism of the Yoga and the atheism of Buddhism and affirms a thorough-going theism. Like Buddhism, Christianity is a life-system which is concerned in the redemption of man but where Buddhism would rescue man by annihilating him, Christianity redeems him by a positive salvation process based upon the conception of human values which Buddhism is unable to discover. There is another sharp contrast between Christianity and the other oriental systems reviewed in that while Taoism has an empty world and the Vedanta a worldless self, Christianity affirms a world-soul to which man stands in living relation but with which he can never be identified. As man seeks God in whom he lives and moves and has his being,¹ it is not that he may be Brahminically absorbed in Deity but rather that his own personality may be preserved by right relations with an objective God. Sharper still is the contrast between the inactivity, so characteristic of the Taoistic and Indian thinking, and the Christian philosophy of activity. Jesus was no ascetic. He was the doer of mighty deeds. However, the activity of Christianity is not to be confused with the form of activity repudiated by other oriental thought but is rather to be conceived as the performance of a mighty deed whereby the soul, escaping the world of nature, becomes engaged in the great spiritual tasks of filling out the proportions of its own peculiar nature. This is the meaning of the paradoxical teaching of Jesus: "Whosoever shall seek to gain his life ($\tauὴν ψυχὴν$) shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."² The renunciation advocated by Christianity rests upon grounds both theistic and moral and proceeds toward a goal of positive values for man. With these general characteristics of the Christian system before us, we shall seek to exhibit its requirements for, and the use it makes of, renunciation.

1. *Acts xvii:28.*

2. *Luke xvii:33.*

The sharp antithesis which Jesus makes between the flesh (*σάρξ*) and the spirit (*πνεῦμα*) must be our starting point. The *σάρξ* is the life of the natural man which must be renounced in favor of the *πνεῦμα* which is a higher form of life known as *ἔνθη αἰώνιος* with the world-order of its own *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ*. To enter this kingdom, Christianity requires the *μετάνοια* by which a man repudiates his whole life of conduct and thought as completely as a new beginning or a new birth.¹ Man is required to enter into the Christian life by the way of baptism which is a symbol of death² and proclaim his Christian discipleship by the use of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, another symbol of death.³ The desires and values of the man of nature must give way for the new desires and values of the man of the spirit.⁴ It is this transvaluation of values which drew the bitter attack of Nietzsche, the great foe of the Christian system. The value-judgment under which Christianity proceeds has its seat in the inner and personal life. "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life."⁵ As compared with the soul values, earthly possessions must occupy a lower plane nor do they contribute to these values.⁶ The abandonment of worldly goods is not because they are essentially evil, as Buddhism declares, but they stand in the way of a higher good. When the wealthy young man sought entrance into the kingdom, he was told by Jesus to sell all he possessed and distribute the proceeds to the poor.⁷ Christian renunciation may even extend to the maiming of the physical body. If the hand or the foot or the eye leads astray, it is to be taken from the body.⁸ Separation from one's own family and relatives and the very hating of one's own life are

1. Matt. iv:17 with John iii:3.
2. Rom. vi:5.
3. I Cor. xi:26.
4. Gal. v:19-22.
5. Matt. xvi:26.
6. Luke xii:15.
7. Mark x:21.
8. Mark ix:43f.

counselled by Jesus,¹ and finally this renunciation extends to the sacrificing of earthly life itself: "Whosoever doth not bear his own cross (Roman instrument of execution) and come after me, cannot be my disciple."² Under the figures of the tower builder and the king going to war, Jesus teaches that this painful renunciation must be deliberately and thoughtfully accomplished.³ Nothing less than the complete abandonment of the man of nature with his desires and possessions can satisfy the Christian ideal. "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not *all* that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."⁴ It was under the realization of the thorough-going renunciation of the Christian system which led Luther to say: "Have done with thy body, goods, honor, child and wife; let them go." (Nehmen sie Leib, Gut, Ehr, Kind und Weib, Lass fahren dahn.)⁵

In the teachings of St. Paul, Christian renunciation takes a specific direction which can be summed up under the phrase "The Road to Damascus," that is to say the great renunciation which followed his conversion to Christianity becomes for him the ideal form. Like the modern Huysmans, St. Paul sets down his conversion to the mercy and grace of God and from this conviction he develops his doctrine of the invalidity of works of merit. The value element in Christianity for St. Paul is the *Καίνοτης ζωῆς*⁶ but for the attaining of which he absolutely distrusts human activity. He seems almost Taoistic in his demand that so far as attempting to perform the requirements of the ceremonial or moral law, one had better do nothing: "Neither circumcision availleth anything nor uncircumcision."⁷ The moral law is as helpless as the ceremonial: "By the works of the law shall no flesh

1. Luke xiv:26.
2. Luke xiv:27.
3. Luke xiv:28.
4. Luke xiv:33.
5. Quoted by Wendt "The Teaching of Jesus," tr. John Wilson, Vol. II, ch. vii, sec. 3.
6. Rom. vi., 4.
7. Gal. v., 6.

be justified.¹ Having thus cleared the way, St. Paul states his great thesis of Christianity: "A man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."² This faith he makes the gift of the supernatural³ and teaches the necessity for a quiescent state in which man renounces all personal merit and self activity.⁴ Like other forms of oriental thought, Christianity affirms the necessity of practicing non-resentment and non-resistance, but upon theistic grounds. Jesus teaches the love of enemies and the non-resistance of evil because such a course exhibits a certain Divine likeness.⁵ St. Paul makes the practice of non-resistance a preparation for the play of Divine justice: "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God."⁶

These renunciatory teachings of Christianity bore fruit in practical life in many and various ways, often in extreme forms and also suffered certain modifications as Christianity took its way from its oriental home of inactivity and quiescence to the more active conception of life as held by Pagan culture in the Roman Empire. The conflict between Paganism and Christianity was very sharp and when the latter won the day, humanity experienced one of the greatest revolutions of history. Because of the universal appeal of Christianity and its conception of its task of converting the whole race of mankind, this revolution concerned more than European races but effected the human interests of a world. This revolution meant nothing else than the complete overthrow of all life's theories which Nietzsche terms the "Transvaluation of all values." This transformation of values made its mark deeply upon all religious and philosophic thinking of medievalism and modernity. Where Pagan culture affirmed the world of nature and made self-preservation the first law, Christianity denied the world and taught the losing of self.

1. Gal. ii., 16.
2. Rom. iii., 28.
3. Eph. ii., 8.
4. Rom. iii., 19.
5. Matt. 38ff.
6. Rom. xii:19.

For the self-assertive virtues of courage, justice, and temperance as these were conceived by pagan thinkers, Christianity substituted the submissive virtues of patience, non-resentment, non-resistance and abstention. Humility was put in the place of ambition, silence in the place of eloquence, pity and mercy in the place of the natural virtues of the Greeks. In fact the virtues of the Greek and Roman morality were considered by such Christian thinkers as Augustine but splendid vices. In practical life, therefore, the negative position of Christianity found expression in many extreme ethical practices as witnessed by such movements as Gnosticism, Monasticism and other forms of asceticism. Especially is it worthy to note the place of the "*Via negativa*" of the Mystics, a form of renunciation which predominated in the medieval period. The "*Via negativa*" has its roots in the teachings of Augustine who took the position that life has no meaning apart from God and union with God is the highest end of man.¹ Augustine divorced the will from the human consciousness and found it wholly incapable of moral or spiritual conquest, therefore there is nothing which man can do and his salvation is wholly determined by the arbitrary will of God. For those whom God determines to redeem there exists the "Momentous Will."² Like St. Paul, Augustine does away with all works of human merit as useless. It is by surrender that man comes into union with the Divine but this union demands the contempt of self: "The two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God even to the contempt of self."³ It was left for Dionysius to coin the phrase "*Via negativa*" which he contrasts with the "*Via affirmata*" and illustrates it by the figure of the sculptor who "Cuts away all superfluous material and brings to light the beauty hidden within, so we negate everything in order that without veils we may know that Un-

1. Confessions, tr., J. G. Pilkington, bk. I, ch. 1.
2. Confessions, bk. viii, chs. 8, 9.
3. City of God, bk. v, ch. 18.

known who is concealed by all the light in existing things."¹ It is this road which leads to that "Union above all thought, above the states of consciousness, above all knowledge."² Those who follow this road will lay aside all mental energies and by pure contemplation will participate "With unimpassioned and immaterial mind."³ This "*Via negativa*" provides for Albertus Magnus a state of quiescence and mental inactivity which appears Buddhistic in character: "Nothing pleases God more than a mind free from all occupations and distractions. Such a mind is in a manner transformed into God; other creatures and itself it sees only in God."⁴ Again in German mysticism, the "*Via negativa*" holds sway in the thinking of Tauler who advocates the poverty of the inner life, entire resignation and the absolute denial of self and all self-love.⁵ The hold which the "*Via negativa*" had upon the minds of ethical thinkers through the medieval period is well summed up by Inge: "God can best be described by negatives, discovered by the stripping off of all qualities and attributes which veil him. He can only be reached by divesting ourselves of all the distinctions of personality and the sinking or the rising into our 'uncreated nothingness,' and he can only be imitated by aiming at an abstract spirituality, the passionless 'apathy' of an universal which is nothing in particular."⁶

But while medieval life was seemingly dominated by the Christian ideals of self-denial and world-abandonment, there were undercurrents of life and thought which escaping this domination found expression in the life of the Germanic nations, which were never converted to Christianity as such but only to the Church. Therefore, along with the poetry of the Church with its dream of deliverance from world-weariness and its exaltation of the passive virtues of patience and obed-

1. Mys. Theo., ch. 2:1.

2. Div. name, ch. 14.

3. Ib.

4. De adhaerendo Deo, quoted by Inge, Christian Mysticism. Lecture iv.

5. The Inner Way, tr. A. W. Hutton.

6. Christian Mysticism, Lecture iii.

ience, there flourished the *epic* poem with its heroes and its heroines, its virtues of ferocious courage and hatred of enemies. It is not without significance that such an exhibition of heroism and strength as is embodied in the *Nibelungenlied* should be a product of medieval life. While the *epic* was exploiting the hero of strength, the *lyric* was singing of the joy of life and the love of the world. Even St. Paul's discount of worldly wisdom was not generally accepted and the teachings of Christianity were cast into the rationalistic moulds of Scholastic theology. It was this counter-movement, which smouldering in the Middle Ages, finally burst forth and ushered in the modern era with its two great revolutions: the Renaissance and the Reformation. The former, with its ardent admiration for the Pagan ideals of life, was a rebellion against the Christian renunciation of the world and the denial of self. The latter was a rebellion against the dead dogmas and authority of the Church but agreed with the Renaissance in the desire for freedom and individualism. The Reformation did not turn from the Christian ideals of self-denial and world-estrangement but rather from the false ways into which these had fallen. Luther considered the earth but a vale of tears and demanded self-denial of the most thorough-going character. It was this element in the Reformation which served to check the Renaissance movement toward a worldly life and artistic culture, especially in northern Europe. But whatever be the historical relation of the two movements, they made possible the rise of the rationalistic spirit which is the characteristic of the modern era. It is the work of this spirit which opened a new era for the ethical ideal of renunciation.

B. MODERNITY.—RATIONALISTIC WITHDRAWAL FROM NATURE.

Amid the profound changes wrought by the revival of learning, the consequent breaking of traditional authority, the rise of freedom and individualism and the ascendancy

of the autonomy of reason, renunciation emerges as a problem within the nature of man. Up to the dawning of modernity, it had served to relate man to some external principle as the nihilistic metaphysics of the Tao, or the Brahman of the Yoga, the Nirvana of Buddhism or the Kingdom of God of Christianity or in other words its field was metaphysical and moral but with the entrance of the modern spirit, its field became rationalistic.

The great problem raised by Descartes (1596-1650) was the interaction of mind and body. He conceived of matter and mind as distinct substances absolutely independent of one another. The body has extension for its essential attribute while the mind has thought. The former has nothing of thought and the latter nothing of extension, therefore, extended substance and thinking substance have nothing whatever in common. The two substances are entirely opposed to each other and absolutely exclude one another. There can be no reciprocal action between them, the attributes of each excluding the other from the very nature of their constitution. Therefore the seeming interaction of body and mind can not exist. In this abrupt and dogmatic fashion, Descartes created the dualism between mind and matter which lead Hobbes and the Materialists to cry: "There is no spiritual substance" and Berkley and the Idealists to say "There are no bodies." However, there is a reciprocal relation between body and mind which can not be so dismissed and Descartes, while never identifying matter and mind, does not deny the interaction but ascribes it to the power of God. By this abandonment of any attempt to explain upon natural grounds this interaction of body and mind, Descartes opened the way for the rise of Occasionalism as formulated by the Cartesians, Cordemoy and De La Forge and systematically developed by Arnold Geulincx (1624-69) and Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715). Occasionalism is the theory of *causae occasionales*. Since neither body nor mind can effect each other in any way, it is God "on the occasion" of physical stimulus produces the sensation in the mind and "on the oc-

casion" of a determination of the will, produces the bodily movements. Geulincx bases his occasionalistic position upon the Cartesian principle: "Cogito, ergo sum." All knowledge rests upon the certainty of self and all activity upon consciousness. Any activity of which I have no knowledge is not mine: "Quod nescis, quomodo fiat, id non facis," (Unless I know how an event happens, I am not the cause.) It is upon this principle that Geulincx builds his system. If I am not the cause, there must be some cause for this activity. A decision of the will does effect bodily movements and sense-stimuli produce sensations in the mind but I am ignorant of how the will influences the body, and the body, from its nature, can not effect the mind, therefore both bodily movements and mental sensations are produced by God. Sense-stimulus or will-decision serve only as the *occasion* for the Divine activity. It follows from this metaphysical position that the individual has no power beyond the mere act of willing and the ethical system of Geulincx is a natural and logical deduction from his metaphysical principles. Since we can effect nothing in the material world, why will anything? God does not require works but dispositions for the results of volition are beyond our power. "Ubi nihil vales, ibi nihil velis"—(Where thou canst do nothing, there will nothing.) This is the ethical principle for Geulincx and from it he deduces our moral vocation which consists in the renunciation of the world and the retirement into ourselves. In developing this ethical system, Geulincx makes virtue to be: "Amor Dei ac Rationis"—(The love of God and Reason.)¹ The fundamental principle is the love of reason which is the law of God in us. Reason gives us the true knowledge of self and it is the highest virtue to bring our wills and actions into harmony with this knowledge. Our love to God must be self-renouncing and obedient but as an ethical principle, love of reason is to be preferred: "Virtus potius est amor Rationis."² Geulincx discusses the four car-

1. *Ethica*, Tr. I, cap. I, sec. 2.
2. *Ib.*, Tr. I, cap. I, sec. 2.

dinal virtues or properties of moral excellence (*Virtues Cardinales sunt Proprietates Virtutis.*) These are *Diligentia*, *Obedientia*, *Justitia* and *Humilitas*.¹ By *Diligentia* is meant the listening to the commands of reason (*Diligentia est auscultation.*)² The result of listening and waiting for the voice of reason is wisdom (*Frustus Diligentia est prudentia*) but wisdom in the sense of prudence.³ *Obedientia* is executing the commands of reason (*Obedientia est executio rationis.*)⁴ It has two parts; to omit what reason prohibits and to do what reason commands (*Partes Obedientia sunt duae: Facere & Mittere, quod vetat Ratio, facere quod jubet.*)⁵ *Obedientia* is the way to human liberty. "Obedientia est Libertas: Nemini enim servit, qui Rationi servit, sed liberrimus est hoc ipso: facit quod vult"—(Obedience is liberty, for he serves no one who serves reason but is free himself. He does what he wishes.)⁶ The third cardinal virtue is *Justitia* which is conforming the whole conduct of life to what reason says is right (*Justitia est adaequatio rationis.*)⁷ There are also two parts of the *Justitia*: purity and perfection. The former removes what is excessive and is the right arm of justice, while the latter supplies what is lacking and is the left hand of justice (*Puritas resecat quod nimis est: estque velut dexterum brachium Justitia: Perfectio supplet quod minus est; estque velut sinistra.*)⁸ That which is excessive in our lives is vice (*Vitium per excessum*) and that which is lacking is also vice (*Vitium per defectum.*) By equalizing the excessive and defective, *Justitia* leads to satiety and satisfaction (*Frustus Justitia est Satietas.*)⁹ Our worthiest inner feelings find satisfaction in justice as Geulincx conceives it. Finally, *Humilitas* the recognition of our impotence is ac-

1. *Ethica*, Tr. I, cap. II.
2. *Ib.*, Tr. I, cap. II, sec. 1.
3. *Ib.*, Tr. I, cap. II, sec. 1.
4. *Ib.*, Tr. I, cap. II, sec. 2.
5. *Ib.*, sec. 2:2.
6. *Ib.*, sec. 2:4.
7. *Ib.*, sec. 3:I.
8. *Ib.*, sec. 3:I.
9. *Ib.*, Tr. I, cap. II, sec. 3:4.

cording to Geulincx the sum of all the cardinal virtues (*Vir-tutem Cardinalium summa*) and is defined as "Contempt of self because of love of God and Reason" (*Humilitas est contemptio sui praे Amore Dei ac Rationis.*)¹ It is this cardinal virtue which leads us into the very heart of the ethical system of Geulincx. By "*Contemptio sui*" he does not mean a positive contempt of self but a negative contempt; "*Contemptio, inquam, non positiva, sed negativa.*"² *Humilitas* does not require that one condemn himself positively, defane himself, beat himself, or otherwise do evil to himself: that indeed is not humility *per se*: but it is the greatest madness, for reason *per se* enjoins no such thing upon us."³ While there may be necessity for a positive contempt of self as the confession of a crime or the cutting away of incurable portions of the body, such a course is not humility which requires the negative contempt of the self.⁴ Geulincx divides this virtue into two parts: "*Inspectio & Despectio sui.*"⁵ By the former he means, like Socrates, "Know thyself" by accurate investigation and by the latter, the despising and the surrendering of the self to God as the consequence of "*Inspectio sui.*"

Proceeding to inspect the self, Geulincx begins with self-consciousness and studies the relation between mind and body. He is unable to discover any connection or interaction between them. He wills and bodily movements follow but how he does not know. He says "Sed motum ego illum non facio: nescio enim quomodo peragatur" (But I did not make that motion; I do not know how it is done.)⁶ Further he says: "Nescio enim, quomodo, & per quos nervos, aut alias vias, motus e cerebro in artus meos derivetur? nescio quomodo ad ipsum cerebrum perveniat? & an perveniat? (I do not even know how and through what nerves or other ways a

1. *Ethica*, sec. 2:I.
2. *Ib.*, sec. 2:I.
3. *Ib.*, sec. 2:I.
4. *Ib.*, sec. 2:I.
5. *Ib.*, sec. 2:I.
6. *Ib.*, Tr. I, sec. 2:2.

motion from my brain, is directed to my limbs; I do not know how it reached that very brain, and whether it did.)¹ If there is an union between body and mind, who is the cause of it? Geulincx does not believe that it can be the individual for he does not know how the union takes place or that it takes place at all. As a result of the inspection of self, Geulincx comes to this conclusion "Jam itaque novi conditionem mean, Nudus sum hujusce Mundi contemplator; spectator sum in hac scena, non actor." (Thus now I know my condition: I am only a contemplator of this world; a spectator am I in this scene, not an actor.)² How he came into such a condition, Geulincx declares he does not know and concludes that God alone causes him to see the spectacle. The consequence of this inspection of self is "*Despectio sui*." This is the other part of humility and its complement (Altera pars Humilitas est sui *Despectio*; Haec est *Humilitatis complementum*).³ Geulincx defines *despectio sui* as follows: "Consistit ea *Despectio* in mei ipsius derelictione, qua ego Deo, cuius, ut vidi totus sum" (This contempt consists in the abandoning of myself, by which I surrender all to God whose, as I have seen, I am entire).⁴ The individual thus is nothing and God is all. Man has no will and God is all will. Man is only a tool in the hand of God and hence man's greatest virtue is to be a willing tool. Certain obligations follow the "*Contemptio sui*." Primarily we must will nothing: "Ubi nihil valeo, ibi nihil volo. . . nihil valeo denotat inspectionem sui, nihil volo denotat despectionem sui." (Where I effect nothing, there I will nothing. . . . I effect nothing marks the inspection of self, I will nothing marks the contempt of self).⁵ Another moral obligation is to preserve our lives. Since we are here by the will of God, it is our duty to abide here until he commands "Non exire ex hac vita, nisi Deus revocaverit." (Not to depart from this

1. *Ethica*, sec. 2:2.
2. *Ib.*, Tr. I, sec. II; ii, 11
3. *Ib.*, iii:1.
4. *Ib.*, iii:1.
5. *Ib.*, iv:1.

life unless God recalls.)¹ Geulincx was a sharp opponent of suicide. We must abide by the will of God even if circumstances of life be dreadful and we be threatened with a thousand deaths.² It is not only our duty to preserve our lives but to preserve the race. Man is under obligation to procreate: "Sicut edere debeo, ut ego hic maneam sic & aliqui generare debent, ut genus humanum hic maneat." (Just as I ought to eat that I may remain here, so even ought we to procreate that the race of men may remain here.)³ Here Geulincx is in sharp opposition to the Buddhist and Schopenhauer who advocate the extinction of the race as the greatest blessing for mankind. Unlike Taoism, Geulincx believes in work and activity but only so far as they make for the preservation of the self and posterity and must be free from all self-interest that every thing may be submitted to God. In this respect Geulincx approaches the Yoga doctrine. Discussing the question of happiness, he believes that man is unhappy because he seeks happiness, "Umbra est felicitas; fugit te, cum, sequeris sam; sequitur te, cum fugis." (Happiness is a shadow; it flees you when you follow it and it follows you when you flee it.)⁴ Happiness is not attained by pursuing it but it will pursue those who flee from it. Man must take care of his obligation to God and he will have no time to pursue happiness. His premises granted, Geulincx is logical to the end. If we are related to the world as mere spectators, totally unable to effect any thing in it, then our ethical vocation must consist in renouncing the world, obediently fulfilling the obligations consequent upon *inspectio sui*. According to Geulincx, therefore, the highest morality is the willing submission to God founded upon a thorough *contemptio sui*.

The Cartesian schism between mind and body not only profoundly influenced Geulincx and his ethical system but

1. *Ethica*, Tr. I, sec. II, v.
2. *Ib.*, v:3.
3. *Ib.*, vi:2.
4. *Ib.*, Tr. I, sec. II, pt. II.

it affected certain of his contemporaries along similar lines. For Nicolas Malebranche, the problem of mind and body maintained its reality and Occasionalism offered the only solution. However, where God was the actor for Geulincx, he became the thinker for Malebranche "God is the intelligible world or the place of minds, as the material world is the place of bodies."¹ We see, therefore, the material world only because God reveals it to us. He is to the mind what light is to the eye. As the eye dwells in light, so the mind is in God, thinks in God and sees in God. Objects are ideas in God in archetypal form and we being in God, see objects through these ideas so that all knowledge consists in seeing as God sees. It follows then that if all knowledge consists in knowing God, all morality consists in loving God. The error of life comes from the fact that the soul is united to the body as well as to God and the sensuous rises and mingles with the ideas from God and the will is misled. The true conduct of life, therefore consists in making the body subordinate to the mind, subduing the passions, all of which amounts to a decided asceticism. Like Geulincx, Malebranche can find no place for man's will. He has no will. God is all will and the human virtue is to surrender everything, body, passions, will and the world for the love of God that we may be able to think his thoughts purely and absolutely.

With Spinoza, the schism of Cartesianism disappears. Thought and extension become attributes of one substance, God, impersonal and unintelligible and with indifferent will. Soul is but the modification of the thought of God and body but the modification of his substance. Will and intellect are identical in their essence. As a part of the Divine Being we are passive beings, limited, impotent and the slave of things. Our freedom comes through the knowledge of things as they are. A passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we know its real nature. Morality is the knowledge of

1. *The Search after truth*, tr. T. Taylor, pt. II, ch. 6.

things as they are. "The highest good of the mind is the knowledge of God, and the highest virtue of the mind is to know God."² To be virtuous is to act in accordance with this knowledge. This is similar to Guelincx. In fact the "Amor intellectualis Dei" of Spinoza² corresponds with the "Amor Dei et rationis" of Geulincx. Spinoza would make the highest end of conduct a constant and eternal love of God and consequently, man's attitude toward the world must be one of mental acquiescence. Necessity and joyful resignation sum up the ethical teachings of Spinoza.

It is quite evident that the ultimate end of these lines of thought from Cartesianism through Geulincx, Malebranche and Spinoza would be a determinism of pronounced character. God becomes the real agent and man but a will-less and passive being. This particular form of thought found an unwilling mind in another thinker of this period who also was influenced by Cartesianism,—Blaise Pascal (1623-62). He turned away from reason for it failed to satisfy and from nature because it made him pessimistic and took refuge in the feelings. In a sense Pascal resembled Kant. As Kant did away with speculative reason to make a place for the practical reason, Pascal put away all natural philosophy and turned to ethics where he believed there was stability. God is not conceived through reason but felt by the heart is Pascal's principle. Sin has driven out our love for God with which we were created and self-love has taken its place. Our moral vocation, therefore, consists in hating and renouncing self and despising the world in order to make a place for the grace of God. The merit of human volition is in not resisting this transforming grace of God. Pascal's contempt for philosophy, his pessimistic outlook upon nature and man, his exaltation of the will above reason, make him a forerunner of Schopenhauer to whose system of ethics we must now turn.

1. *Ethic*, pt. 5, prop. 25, tr. W. H. White.

2. *Ib.*, prop. 36.

C. REVIVAL OF RENUNCIATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

As yet our historical inquiry has yielded no substantial metaphysical basis for our ethical ideal of renunciation. This, however, is the contribution of the Nineteenth Century to our subject. In the systems of Taoism and Yogaism, renunciation received some metaphysical support, but it was crude, naive and dogmatic in character, while in Buddhism and Christianity, the ground was predominantly ethical. With the rise of rationalism, renunciation was placed on a rational basis in the Occasionalism of Geulincx and Malebranche.

The reign of renunciation in this field was brief and in the strife which succeeded Cartesianism between Empiricism on the one hand and Idealism on the other, it practically disappeared from the philosophical field, both in the pre-Kantian period and in the German Idealism which followed the development of the Kantian principles. Traces of renunciation, however, are not lacking in the general literature of the earlier periods of the Nineteenth Century, but they appeared in the unreasoned and impulsive pessimism which was common. Striking examples of renunciation may be found in the poetry of Leopardi and A. de Lamartine. In the former there is a denial of the value of human life and an urgent counselling to despise self and nature,¹ while the latter seeks Christian resignation as an anodyne for the pains and ills of human existence.² Schelling, also, in his *Nachtwachen* makes the life of man but the mask of nonentity, only something which will be torn in pieces and cast away.³ But it is not until the system of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) appeared that renunciation is thoroughly revived and placed on metaphysical grounds. Like Buddha, Schopenhauer condemned human life *in toto*. He could find no such thing as human happiness for the evil in the world far outweighs the

1. Quoted by James Sully, "Pessimism," pg. 26.

2. Ib., pg. 27.

3. Ib., pg. 28.

good. This world is the worst possible of worlds because if it were slightly worse it could not exist at all. Human life is valueless and if there appear to be elements of value in it, these are over-balanced by the worthless elements with which life abounds. Non-existence is, therefore, to be preferred to existence and the complete renunciation of life and the world is the only course for man to pursue. To see Schopenhauer's contribution to our subject, it will be necessary to examine his metaphysical grounds and trace something of the way in which he lays the foundation and proceeds to build his ethical system with its hedonic pessimism, which ends in his thorough-going ideal of renunciation.

Starting with the subjective idealism of Kant and proceeding *a priori*, Schopenhauer reduces the phenomenal world to Idea¹ and the noumenal world or the "Ding an sich" to Will.² This Will, which is the metaphysical principle of the system and "The inmost nature, the kernel of every particular thing and of the whole" is in its nature but a striving impulse, ever striving for objectification but blindly and unintelligently. This objectification of the Will appears in every grade of nature from the lowest blind force to the highest and most deliberate action of man. In man this principle comes to self-consciousness and knows itself as volitional activity. The whole phenomenal world leaps into existence as the mirror of the Will but as we shall see later, the Will has over-reached itself in kindling this light of knowledge for it develops the power to react upon the Will and to bring about its self-surrender.³ The stimulus of this activity of the world principle is found in want which arises from deficiency and, therefore, from suffering. Suffering is the ever present companion of the Will and the higher the grade of objectification the more intense the suffering. For this reason the Genius would suffer most of all men.⁴ Man finds relief from this suffering in Art, which serves to quiet

1. The World as Will and Idea, tr. Haldane and Kemp, Vol. I, bk. 1.

2. Ib., bk. 2.

3. Ib., Vol. I, bk. 2, secs. 24-27.

4. Ib., bk. 3, sec. 30.

the striving of the Will. Art provides the opportunity for contemplation during which man becomes a "Will-less, painless and timeless subject of knowledge." This relief, however, is limited to only a few for contemplation is difficult to attain, and even for these favored few the relief is only temporary, for the state of contemplation is fleeting. Aesthetics, thus failing to give man any lasting satisfaction or relief from his suffering incident to the incessant striving of the Will, Schopenhauer turns to the ethical field.¹ A further study of the World-Will, leads Schopenhauer to see that it is always willing life and in its essence is the "WILL-TO-LIVE." Now if the essence of man is the Will-to-live and he has in his power the control of this metaphysical principle, and man has such a power in his intellect, the human problem is, therefore, the assertion or the denial of the Will-to-live.² Schopenhauer does not hesitate in his course of action but proceeds to suppress the Will-to-live. With knowledge as either the motive or the quieter of the Will, man may well ask what is to be gained by the assertion of the Will. Schopenhauer answers that only dissatisfaction and suffering can result. The Will has no goal and is therefore susceptible to no final satisfaction. The striving goes on forever, restrained only by hindrances which produce suffering. There being no end of striving, there can be no end of suffering.³ In the individual, there may seem to be an aim for the Will which will be the satisfaction of a want but *a posteriori*, we know that if the want is satisfied, satiety is begotten and ennui ensues which is only another form of pain. The want of life is pain and the satisfaction of want leads to pain, thus human life "Is tossed backwards and forwards between pain and ennui."⁴ Whatever happiness there is in life is purely negative,—only the deliverance from pain, and therefore at the best, can never be enduring.⁵ To assert the Will is to

1. *The World as Will and Idea*, Vol. I, bk. 3, sec. 52.

2. *Ib.*, bk. 4, sec. 54.

3. *Ib.*, bk. 4, sec. 56.

4. *Ib.*, bk. 4, sec. 57.

5. *Ib.*, sec. 58.

continue this miserable existence in a world which like "All bad ware is covered over by a false lustre." To escape the badness and the delusion of existence, the denial of the Will-to-live is the only remedy. This denial can never take the form of suicide which is only a very strong assertion of the Will and effects the particular manifestation of the World-Will only. Equipped with knowledge, man sees suffering in the world and feeling it in his own life, he pierces the veil of delusion which hangs over his existence and deliberately sets himself, by various practices, to deny the Will. Ultimately this means the Will-to-live turning upon itself and surrendering its existence. When this is absolutely and completely done, all things are abolished and there remain "No Will, no idea, no world,"¹ and the renunciation is victorious. Nothing remains. This nothingness is the highest goal and by no means should be evaded or as Schopenhauer sums it up: "We must banish the dark impression of that nothingness which we discern behind all virtue and holiness as their final goal, and which we fear as children fear the dark; we must not even evade it like the Indians, through myths and meaningless words, such as re-absorption in Brahma or the Nirvana of the Buddhists. Rather do we freely acknowledge that what remains after the entire abolition of the Will is for all those who are still full of Will, certainly nothing; but, conversely, to those in whom the Will has turned and has denied itself, this our world, which is so real, with all its suns and milky-ways is nothing."² Sharp is the contrast between Schopenhauer and the Occasionalists. Where Geulinckx and Malebranche left man without will, Schopenhauer made him all will. For the former, the world must be renounced because the will can effect nothing and for the latter renunciation of the world is the only escape from the will which effects too much. The Occasionalists did not advocate asceticism nor chastity but for Schopenhauer these are useful instruments in subduing the

1. *The World as Will and Idea*, Vol. I, bk. 4, sec. 71.

2. *Ib.*, sec. 71.

will and making for the complete extinction of the race, which to him is the greatest of blessings.

Among the disciples of Schopenhauer, there is a turning away from his extreme pessimistic conclusions with the exception of Junius Bahnsen (1830-1881) who went to the greatest length, even denying the consolation of Aesthetics and the possibility of the final annihilation of the Will-to-live. He could find no evidence of intelligence, order or design in the universe and therefore any representation of it in Art, instead of bringing quiet and satisfaction as Schopenhauer contended, could only produce disturbances and even anguish to the logical mind of man. Having dispensed with the intellect, Bahnsen destroyed the only instrument which Schopenhauer possessed for the subduing of the will and left nothing but the "Will rending itself in an eternal self-partition." He concludes that all affirmation of life and the world is useless. "Enough, so far our senses, our search, our thought, our speculative grubbing, reach, we obtain nothing but a vain moaning in the world and no prospect of release."¹

The human mind, however, can not content itself with a view of life entirely devoid of hope or consolation. Even Schopenhauer sought something of consolation in his idea of eternal justice, the exaltation of Art and the freedom from the fear of death. It is to be expected that there would be disciples of Schopenhauer who would seek to soften the hard lines of their Master's conclusion. Such a disciple was Frauenstädt (1813-1878) who denied that the term pessimist could be applied to a cosmical system which asserts the denial of the Will-to-live and sought some consolation for the Will. He distinguishes between the higher Will of man and the inferior will of the animal which Schopenhauer had identified.² By rejecting the subjective idealism of his master, he is able to find a reality in human history and an end and plan for the historical process. Thus he gave Will the

1. Sully's Pessimism, pg. 107.

2. Sully's Pessimism, pg. 108.

element of purpose in which resides the consolidation and offers a basis for a sort of reconciliation between pessimism and optimism.

But by far the most important follower of Schopenhauer is Edward von Hartmann (1842-1906) who, while accepting the general position of the founder of the Pessimistic School, sought to escape his extreme conclusions. Hartmann admits the misery of the human existence and advocates the denial of the Will-to-live as the only hope for man but upon a more optimistic basis than Schopenhauer. In his "Philosophy of the Unconscious" he attempts to reconcile Schopenhauer and Hegel by making the Will unconsciously intelligent and by so doing, approaches the optimism of Leibnitz. Where Schopenhauer had his Platonic ideas to serve as stages in the evolution of the Will, Hartmann makes the idea the guide of the Will as it realizes itself in the world. By the introduction of the principle of intelligence, Hartmann is able to agree with Leibnitz that this is the best possible world. He says: "If, in the all-wise Unconscious, among all possible representations, that of a better world had had a place, this other would certainly have been produced."¹ However, since it is the nature of the Will to be eternally unsatisfied and all pleasure consists in such satisfaction, this world, while the best possible, is only a world of pain and misery, to which nothingness is decidedly preferable. Thus so far as the nature of the world is concerned, Hartmann and Schopenhauer are in agreement, but where the latter makes evil irreparable, the former by assuming an end for the world, makes evil reparable. Again Hartmann differs from his master, in the effect of the denial of the Will. When the Unconscious comes to consciousness, the intellect is emancipated from the Will and man becomes conscious of the nature of the Will and the pain and the misery which it must ever cause unless it is subdued, but where Schopenhauer makes the intellect the quieter of the Will, Hartmann makes

1. *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, Vol. III, ch. xvi, tr. W. C. Coupland.

the conscious denial of the Will set up an antagonism within the Will itself between a willing-to-will movement and a non-willing-to-will movement. The result of this antagonism is that the Will devours itself and returns to nothing. Accordingly, Hartmann believes that Schopenhauer's contention for the denial of the Will-to-live, is premature and that instead of the individual denying the Will, he should affirm the Will-to-live or in other words, since the end of the world is to emancipate the intellect from the will, it becomes man's duty to work in harmony with the Unconscious and help on with the world process. Hartmann claims that his optimism supplies an adequate basis for practical effort and hopeful endeavor, the end of which is to so further the cause of intelligence that the race will be brought the more quickly to recognize the futility of willing and all unite in one universal aim to end the misery of the world by one great act of Will-denial.¹

The influence of Schopenhauer's pessimism is not confined to philosophic speculation but appears in certain artistic circles, especially in the works of Richard Wagner (1813-1883). In his earlier thinking, Wagner was under the influence of the Romantic School with its conception of the joy of life, the music of which can be heard in *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser*. However, the very pronounced atmosphere of Hegelian thought had its effect upon Wagner, especially the left school of Hegelianism under the leadership of Feuerbach (1804-72) who turned away from the Hegelian notion that God comes to consciousness in man and posited the principle of self-consciousness as the Absolute and man the beginning, the middle and the end of all things. Under the inspiration of this idea, Wagner began a work which finally developed into the Trilogy of the Nibelung. It is anarchistic in character and aims to make Siegfried, the superman, completely triumphant over Wotan the god. But before the completion of the Nibelung Trilogy, Wagner came under the influence of Schopenhauer, with his principle of the Will of sorrow and weakness. Siegfried, while vanquishing the god, Wotan, by

1. *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, Vol. III, ch. xiv.

breaking his spear, begins to weaken and the Trilogy ends with the sublime renunciation of "Rest, rest Thee Oh God" (Ruhe! Ruhe, du Gott.)¹ The influence of Schopenhauer upon Wagner is seen more in the latter's "Tristan and Isolde," a work of which Wagner said himself, in a letter to Liszt: "I have in my head 'Tristan and Isolde' the simplest and most full blooded musical conception: with the black flag that floats at the end of it I shall cover myself to die." As Siegfried and Brunhilda express the joy of living and the exaltation of the will, Tristan and Isolde express the misery of life and the negation of the will. They praise the night of oblivion and curse the day.² Personality is a delusion: "No more Tristan. . . . no more Isolde" (Nicht mehr Tristan. . . . nicht mehr Isolde.)³ Death is sought as the supreme bliss. The highest joy is unconscious oblivion. As Tristan takes the cup in which he believes is the deadly poison and places its brim to his lips he cries:

"Vergessen's güt'ger Trank,—
dich trink 'ich sonder Wank!"

Thus Wagner would make the renunciation of life and the denial of the will the highest joy. Tristan also practises non-resistance in refusing to defend himself against Melot⁴ and King Mark manifests no resentment against Tristan but in fact forgives him,⁵ while the story ends in the complete negation of the will. As Isolde, in Buddhistic fashion sinks to the breast of the dead Tristan, she utters these renunciatory words:

"In dem wogenden Schwall,
in dem tönen Schall,
in des Welt-Athems
wehendem All,—
ertrinken,
versinken,—
unbewusst,—
höchste Lust!"

1. Die *Götterdämmerung*, Act iii.
2. *Tristan and Isolde*, ed. by Henderson, Act ii, sc. 2.
3. Ib., Act ii, sc. 2.
4. Ib., Act i, sc. 6.
5. Ib., Act iii, sc. 3.
6. Ib., Act iii, sc. 3.
7. Ib., Act iii, sc. 3.

However, Wagner does not cover himself with the "Black flag" of Buddhistic renunciation and Schopenhauerian pessimism as delineated in "Tristan and Isolde" but in the closing years of his life and thought he turned from this pessimism of weakness to the Christian pessimism of strength. This he portrays in "Parsifal" which is really Wagner's great confession of faith. When he wrote a friend near the end of his life these words: "Can you conceive of a moral duty without some form of renunciation" he had accepted the Christian point of view and spoke of renunciation in the Christian sense.

Like Wagner, Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) did not so much argue the principle of renunciation as he portrayed it. He, too, had his romantic period from which he turned to the realistic. It is in this period when renunciation makes its appearance. In "Brand" Ibsen follows to its logical conclusion, the morality of Rigorism with its cry: "All or none."¹ Here the self is nothing, life is nothing but duty is everything; all of which ends in such a severe form of renunciation that it reacts upon itself for its own destruction.² In "Peer Gynt" self-realization is the all but like the severe renunciation of Brand, the "Barrel of self"³ in which Peer Gynt lived, lead him at last to the Button Moulder and his own undoing. Since the empire of the spirit as in "Brand" and the empire of the flesh, as in "Peer Gynt" have neither succeeded, Ibsen combines the two in "Emperor and Galilean" with the intention of creating a third empire, "An empire of Man asserting the eternal validity of his own will."⁴ But in the conflict between the empire of the spirit, represented by Christianity and the empire of the flesh, represented by Julian, Ibsen is unable to secure a victory for his third empire and on the plains of Persia, his empire of flesh succumbs to the empire of the spirit in the dying cry of

1. Brand, Act ii.

2. Ib., Act iii.

3. Peer Gynt, Act iv, sc. 13.

4. Bernard Shaw, *Quintessence of Ibsenism*, pg. 56.

Julian: "Thou hast conquered, Galilean."¹ Thus the will surrenders to the intellect, the flesh to the spirit and the third empire fails of realization. Maximus standing over the dead Julian can only say: "What is it worth to live? All is sport and mockery,—to will is to have to will."² In "Rosmersholm" Ibsen's philosophy of religion with its renunciatory element is well illustrated. The individualist, radical and free-thinker, Rebecca, invades the rigorist Rosmer home and seeks to win the country parson to her ideals. To accomplish her purpose she does not hesitate to plot the destruction of Rosmer's wife who is finally driven to commit suicide. However, before Rebecca goes the whole way with her plans, she repents, confesses the crime of causing the death of Mrs. Rosmer, thus renouncing her egoistic ideals and accepting the "Rosmer view of life."³ The story ends with Rosmer and Rebecca expiating the wrongs of their lives by sacrificing themselves in the same millstream in which Mrs. Rosmer had cast herself. It is quite evident that while Ibsen is a strong individualist, he never loses the sense of moral responsibility and this weighs upon him so heavily that he is rigoristic and therefore unable to escape the element of renunciation.

In the literature of Russia, especially that of Tolstoi and Dostoieffsky, the misery and sorrow of life are so keenly felt that renunciation takes root easily. In his earlier life Tolstoi was a realist. Turning from the teachings of the Church in which he had been brought up, he gave himself to the world of sense. Dissatisfaction overtaking him, he began to feel the emptiness of the world as he saw it. Finding no peace of mind, he became an ardent student of the teachings of Jesus, especially the Sermon on the Mount. He became convinced that he had discovered the fundamental principle of these teachings and of the whole system of Christianity in Matthew 5:38, 39: "Ye have heard that it hath

1. Emperor and Galilean, Act v, sc. 4.

2. Emperor and Galilean, Act v, sc. 4.

3. Rosmersholm, Act v.

been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." This Tolstoi interpreted as meaning: "Whatever injury the evil disposed may inflict upon you, bear it, give all that you have, but resist not."¹ Non-resistance became the real principle of all Tolstoi's teaching. He not only taught this form of renunciation but practiced it. He passed through, on account of it, a profound spiritual experience. He repudiated his former course of life and sought to renounce the world of sense. He agrees with Schopenhauer in doing away with all self-love but is entirely out of sympathy with his conclusions in respect to the human race. Where Schopenhauer seeks to extinguish the race, Tolstoi would have it continue its existence and serve God through the non-resentment of evil and the activity of love.

Dostoieffsky portrays renunciation in the career of Raskolnikoff, the leading character in "Crime and Punishment," who reaches a point where he must *do* something or renounce his life or as he says: "Renounce life altogether and obediently submit to fate as it is, stifle everything and dismiss the right to act, live and love."² He discarded the thought of renunciation and under the spell of the self-assertive Napoleon, he proceeded to commit a double murder and then justified it by his philosophy of self-assertion. According to his line of reasoning, men are divided into ordinary and extraordinary men. The former live, from their very nature, in a state of obedience and have no right to break the law; while the latter, from the sheer force of their individuality, are permitted to overstep all bounds so far as the realization of their own ideas require. For such men there can be the repudiation of all law: "Men for whom, to a certain extent, laws do not exist." This division rests upon nature which separates men into these two categories and the morality of the ordinary man is inferior and that of the extraordinary man is superior.³ But a doubt begins to take shape in the mind of Ras-

1. *My Religion*, ch. 1.

2. *Crime and Punishment*, ch. iv.

3. *Ib.*, ch. v.

kolnikoff that he may not belong to the superior class, a doubt which, under the compunctions of conscience, finally sweeps the ground from under his major morality and at the suggestion of Sonia, he confesses his crime and willingly goes to Siberia. Here is a complete break-down of the ideal of self-realization and a definite repentance and repudiation of the self. Dostoieffsky leaves Raskolnikoff seeking Christian regeneration.¹

While the 19th Century thus witnessed a pronounced revival of renunciation, it is also true that this Century produced the most violent opposition to the idea. This opposition centered principally in two egoistic thinkers, Nietzsche and Sudermann. With the former self-realization through disobedience is posited over against renunciation, while with the latter, it is self-realization both in joys and sins. Both thinkers agree in repudiating renunciation in every form and in setting up in opposition a thorough-going egoism. Wagner and Ibsen did the same in the earlier periods of their thinking but both return from the revolt to a religious basis, but not so with Nietzsche and Sudermann,—they never return. With Sudermann, the opposition to renunciation is found in his portrayal of an individualism which brooks no denial of self in any form. His heroes are not so much immoral as unmoral. They repudiate the law rather than disobey it. They revolt against all social standards and know nothing of repentance or confession of wrong doing. Paul, in "Dame Care" finds his individuality in committing arson and when he confesses his crime in the law court, there is no sense of sin but rather the sense of joy for he says, speaking of his crime, "This deed has given me happiness." In "Magda" the Protagorean view is taken that "Man is the measure of all things." Magda does as she pleases in the world, a world, which to her, has no law. She says to her father, when he asks concerning what she considers to be true: "True to myself," "I am what I am," "I do what

1. *Crime and Punishment*, Epilogue ch. ii.

I do." To her pastor, she declares that to be happy, you must sin and be greater than your sin. In "The Cat's Bridge" Regina has really no sense of right or wrong, while Beata in the "Joy of living" cries out in her individualism "Must every instinct end in remorse?" Sudermann's attack upon the rigoristic ideal of renunciation is intended to make it appear that such an ideal is misleading and unnecessary and he does this by setting up his uncompromising ideal of individualism that it may make its own appeal. This opposition of Sudermann, is very mild as compared with the open and bitter attack of Nietzsche upon all depreciatory ideals of human life. Like Schopenhauer, he made the will the very essence of man but where Schopenhauer conceived of this essence as the Will-to-live and human happiness to consist in over-coming it, Nietzsche developed the notion of the Will-to-power and made human happiness to consist in the very exercise of this power and in "The feeling that power increases." For this reason, Nietzsche was at bitter war with everything which found any weakness or evil in the will. He hated science and religion because he believed that the former belittled man and the latter treated him as though he were sick and placed God over him. Nietzsche argued that all moral standards are man-made and must be constantly changing. Anything which tends to fix a standard of morality is an enemy of man because such a standard hinders the free action of his natural instincts and powers. By the means of will man must rise above all ethical standards, even above the conception of good and evil. By the will man may become the superman. Nietzsche is an immoralist, materialist and empiricist. The superman, which he never really portrays, is the goal of the earth. "Man is a bridge connecting ape and superman. . . . The superman will be the final flower and ultimate expression of the earth."¹ With such a goal conceived for humanity, Nietzsche sweeps away everything which tends to give man a depressing view of himself. He must "Be hard" to all want, pain or misery in the world,

¹. Also *Sprach Zarathustra*, I.

absolutely devoid of all pity or sympathy. As is to be expected every idea which has the appearance of renunciation draws the fire of this immoralist. The *despectio sui* of Geulincx, the return of Wagner to the religious position, the Christian view of life,—all are sharply denounced and often with but little critical estimation. The Third Essay in the *Genealogy of Morals* is given over to the discussion of the question "What do ascetic ideals mean?" Nietzsche answers that for Schopenhauer the ascetic ideal means "To get rid of torture,"¹ by which he means, that for the philosopher or the *educated classes*, the ascetic ideal is a form of self-assertion by which independence is secured.² But having permitted the philosopher to have a "Hard and cheerful will to renunciation," he proceeds to show that all others who practice or advocate renunciation are "Sickmakers" who treat life as a wrong way which we had best retrace or an error which should be disproved by our deeds. Such an ascetic ideal, Nietzsche considers a self-contradiction in that it is the Will-to-power lording over life itself and "Is prompted by the self-protective and self-preserved instinct of degenerating life."³ In other words, the ascetic ideal is the means by which the instinct of self-preservation attempts to counteract the effect of some partial physiological stagnation. Nietzsche thus seeks a physical explanation of this ideal and makes its priest but the victim of delusion, the product of the Will-to-power, operating in the realm of human sickness and weakness. Renunciation is, therefore, only a hypnotic means of getting rid of a physiological depression. Self-contempt is only an attack of bad conscience or to sum it up "The ascetic ideal in the service of an extravagance of feelings."⁴ Especially does Nietzsche pour out his contempt and wrath upon Christianity which he believes places a premium upon weakness and has brought about a transvaluation of all values in that it has placed the weak in the ascendancy and fostered

¹. *Genealogy of Morals*, Tr. W. A. Haussmann, Third Essay, sec. 6.

². Ib., Third Essay, secs. 7, 8.

³. Ib., Third Essay, sec. 13.

⁴. Ib., sec. 20.

slave-morality. The ascetic ideal for Nietzsche is only a disease of the common herd of mankind. It stands in the way of the few strong men,—the "Lucky cases of man," who have the healthy Will-to-power, as a dangerous source of contamination. But why does man will nothing? Nietzsche answers this question by declaring that such is the nature of the Will-to-power that even if man be deluded with the idea of life as a horror, something to be willed away, yet "Rather would man will the *Nothing*, than *not will*."¹ This bitter attack of Nietzsche upon all ascetic ideals serves, at least, to emphasize the very important part which renunciation has played in the life of mankind. For this reason, Nietzsche is of particular value in this historical survey. While he fails to make out a good case for immoralistic individualism, in that he is the victim of the weakness of all subjectivism and is unable to satisfactorily substantiate his theory of the rise of morality, yet he serves us well in being the connecting link between our historical investigation of the renunciatory ideal and its critical estimate.

III. RENUNCIATION AS AN ETHICAL IDEAL.

Our historical review of renunciation as an ethical ideal is now sufficient to indicate something of its universality and persistency in human life, the forms in which it appears and the ends which it seeks. Nietzsche was appalled by the extent and endurance of renunciation. He went so far as to say that an observer from another planet could "Infer that our earth is the essentially *ascetic star*."² In the same connection he notes: "How regularly, how universally, how almost at any period, the ascetic priest makes his appearance; he does not belong exclusively to any race; he flourishes anywhere; he grows out of all classes."³ This observation of Nietzsche is scarcely exaggerated. We have already seen the great fascination of renunciation for the oriental mind, especially in China and India. While its domination is not so marked in

1. Gen. Morals, sec. 28.

2. Ib., pt. III., sec. II.

3. Ib., Third Essay, sec. 28.

the Occident with its ideals of life and activity, nevertheless it is a fundamental principle of Christianity, producing monasticism and mysticism. Even rationalism did not escape its influence as is seen in the teachings of Geulincx and Malebranche. It becomes the great weapon of the pessimism of Schopenhauer and his school. It introduces the melancholy note into the music of Richard Wagner, so pronounced in "Tristan and Isolde" and "Parsifal." It accompanies the sympathy of Russian thought, particularly attractive for Tolstoi and Dostoieffsky. These are only the principle fields in which it appears for scarcely any phase of human life is free from its presence in some form, either to be accepted or dismissed. In form, too, it greatly varies. For the Taoist it takes the form of nihilism, nothing exists, therefore nothing needs to be done. For the Brahman it is a worklessness wherein all motive and purpose disappear from activity. For the Buddhist and Schopenhauer it is life turning upon itself because non-existence is to be preferred to existence. In all these forms, the end of renunciation is the complete extinction of the individual human being because he is a stranger in the world, without a home and without a work. For Geulincx and the Occasionalists, the form is that of a rationalistic withdrawal from nature because man has no work to perform. He has no will to effect anything, and is but a spectator in his world with the ethical vocation of loving God and reason. For Christianity and the Russian Sympathists, the form is rather self-denial with the purpose of building up a spiritual existence upon the ruins of self-love and self-endavor. This form admits that man has a home in the world and a work to accomplish but both home and work are of an unearthly character.

Now how shall we explain the existence of this ideal, so universal, so varied in form and for the most part so inimical to human existence in the world? Nietzsche offers a physiological explanation which we can not accept. Here is a power holding sway over great masses of mankind, often bringing to them a form of satisfaction and inspiring them

to lofty deeds. Man has proven himself as capable of denying himself as of affirming himself. To say with Nietzsche that ascetic ideals are due to the effort of the self-preserving instinct to overcome some "partial physiological stagnation and languishment,"¹ is to underestimate the strength and value of these ideals and to offer a puerile explanation. We must look for more adequate grounds for the renunciatory ideals and we discover these in fields both negative and positive. According to the former, life neither contains nor contents man and on the latter basis the ideal of renunciation is a means by which man can affirm his higher nature and assert his essential superiority to the world of sense and immediacy.

1. It is Nietzsche who calls our attention to the "Lack" element² in the consciousness of humanity and thus renders us a service in suggesting the question so fundamental in our problem, viz. why is man, the seeming child of nature, so dissatisfied and discontented with his natural life in the world? That such is the fact is revealed by his logic by which he seeks to recreate his world from sense impressions; by his aesthetics by which he desires to improve upon nature and in so doing give play to an inner impulse which goes out beyond nature; by his ethics wherein he is continually adjusting and re-adjusting himself with humanity and by his religion wherein he conceives of God and is ever after unable to believe that nature can contain or content him or satisfy his ideals. Again we must make Nietzsche an unwilling contributor to our negative position because he points out that man has "Suffered from the problem of his significance,"³ but we part company with him as to the meaning of this significance. Nietzsche, keeping man wholly ensconced in nature, makes this significance to reside wholly in the will, a characteristic of which he says, is to will something even if it be nothingness.⁴ We take the position, however, that man is

1. Gen. Morals, pt. III, sec. 13.

2. Ib., sec. 28.

3. Ib., pt. III, sec. 28.

4. Ib.

both nature and spirit, deriving from the former his will and from the latter his ideals. It is in the realm of the spirit where his real significance lies. While man is a child of nature in the realm of sense, he is a child of the spirit in his inner life and it is for this reason that nature can never contain nor content him. The introduction of this spiritual conception, places man at once in an ambiguous position. He is not at home in nature nor yet fully cognizant of his place in the spiritual order. "Man's midway position as well as the mixture of sense and spirit in his consciousness make it needful for him to inquire concerning his place in the world-whole and to posit his inner life in contrast to his outer existence."¹ It is this conception of man's relation to a higher order which lead Schiller to see the "Grace and Dignity" in humanity and while not overlooking the intolerable condition of the human lot, believed that man by discovering his true nature and seeking to realize it, could rise above nature and attain to a good, in comparison with which the world of immediacy dwindles into nothingness.² That our problem of renunciation is due to this characteristic of humanity is born out by the history of renunciatory ideals. Why will man turn upon his world as in Taoism and the Vedanta and willingly negate it? The answer lies in the fact that the inner life is unsatisfied, hungry and empty but has not realized its place in the real world-order or even its relation thereto. Why will man turn upon his own life as in Buddhism, unless it be that it appears valueless? Why do Geulincx and Malebranche see no work for man to do, unless it be that he lacks something to make his life effective? Why will Schopenhauer and his school see nothing but hopeless despair for miserable humanity, unless it be that there is the failure to see anything but want? Why this everlasting return of Ibsen, Wagner, Tolstoi and Dostoeffsky from realism, individualism and materialism, to

1. Shaw, *The Value and Dignity of Human Life*, pt. I, sec. 1.

2. Eucken, *Prob. Human Life*, Tr. W. S. Hough and W. R. Gibson, pg. 476.

their repudiation and the positing of something of a religious character, unless it be that the spiritual life is demanding recognition which man, from his very constitution, is willing to give sooner or later. Negatively, therefore, nature can never content nor contain man. The problem which emerges is that of attaining spiritual self-hood in a world of sense and immediacy. Renunciation has a service to render in the solution of this problem. While it has been frequently misused where all life and work, as such, have been repudiated, yet the nature of the problem demands the proper use of this subtle art of repudiation. It is in the positive field of the affirmation of the self in its spiritual nature and in its relation to a new order of life, where renunciation comes to its own rights and proves itself a necessary and important factor.

2. Corresponding to the "Lack" element, observed by Nietzsche, which places man in the negative relation with nature, there is the "More" element observed by Schiller and Eucken. If nature can not contain or content man, it is because man is more than nature. Schiller found this "More" element in the realm of Aesthetics while Eucken sees it in the spheres of logic, morality and self-consciousness.¹ Nature being unable to account for this sense of the "More" without involving itself in dire contradictions, leaves it to be grounded in the ego of a spiritual character. The rise of this spiritual life is not constant. As Eucken observes, history indicates that there are periods of affirmation when the consciousness of the spiritual prevails and then periods of negation when the consciousness of nature and immediacy holds sway.² This can be accounted for on the ground that there is no sharp line between the world of spirit and sense in man. However, the spiritual will not down and in its struggle for realization and affirmation it uses renunciation to subdue the world of sense. That man actually follows such a course of procedure is confined by experience and his-

1. Eucken, *Life's Basis and Life's Ideals*, Tr. A. G. Widgery, pg. 113ff.
2. Eucken, *Life of the Spirit*, Tr. F. L. Pogson, pg. 103.

tory. Man refuses to receive the world in a passive or uncritical spirit, thus indicating his superiority over it and manifesting the dignity and validity of his inner life. The nihilism of the Tao may be unreasonable and repulsive, yet we are compelled to admit that it illustrates the naive struggles of the ego to examine and estimate its world and finding it empty and being unable to discover a positive order, it turns and reduces its world to nothingness. We can not ignore this power of the self to affirm something even if that something be nothing. This struggle with the sense-world underlies the worklessness of the Yoga and the Nirvanism of Buddhism, for with all the weak pessimism of these systems, the Yoga dedicates the self to Brahman in one supreme deed, while Buddhism would save the self by the "Eight-fold path." Geulincx, while advocating the "*Despectio sui*," retains the dignity of being a spectator in the world. Schopenhauer relates the self to the world-will and thus gives it the distinction of intellectual victory over the Will-to-live. The self can even affirm itself by slaying itself. Ibsen has the Button-moulder say to Peer Gynt: "To be one's self is to slay one's self."¹ Christianity announces the same principle when it declares: "Whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." Renunciation is in reality self-affirmation. By the very act of renouncing, the ego proclaims its dignity and superiority and enters into the realization of its own self-hood. As Descartes realized his ontological self in the dictum "*Cogito, ergo sum*," man can realize his ethical self by declaring; "I can renounce the sense world, therefore, I am beyond it."

However, it is not enough to merely renounce even if such an act provides the consciousness of inner integrity and dignity. The world of sense can not be so handled. That it has something of value is the testimony of all culture and civilization. It is only on the basis that this sense-world lies on a lower plain and when it is renounced it is in favor of something higher, that renunciation becomes a valid and

1. Peer Gynt, Act v, sc. ix.

worthy ideal. It was such a conception of the idea which appealed to Goethe and enabled renunciation to secure his favor. He turned away from Christianity largely because of its negative attitude toward the world, but he believed in renunciation in the sense that man must renew his life by "Renouncing particular things at each moment, if he can grasp something new in the next."¹

Under the influence of Spinoza, Goethe said: "Renunciation once for all in view of the eternal" and in this conception he found an "Atmosphere of peace breathe upon him."² It is in some such positive fashion that renunciation renders its service. Nature can not be dismissed as thoroughly bad. That there is good in it the mass of mankind insists on believing. Pessimism exists but it does not flourish long nor well. "No matter how convincing the arguments for renunciation may appear to be, no matter how complete the reasoning of pessimism, life must be a benefit, and he who concludes against it and seeks to negate it must admit that it possesses value if only as an opportunity for the denial on the part of man."³ It is only when renunciation is viewed as a pathway to spiritual life and as an act of self-affirmation in the process of self-realization, that it finds its true place and becomes a valid ideal for life. Humanity, in the long run, turns from absolute renunciation of all life as advocated by the Buddhists and Schopenhauer. Man is too much a part of nature to believe that it is in no sense his home. While Geulincx will admit that man has a home in the world but denies a work for him, he is unable to escape the snares of Occasionalism and the individual is lost in the pantheism of Spinoza who follows Occasionalism to its logical conclusions. Neither the Metaphysical position of Schopenhauer which makes man all will, nor that of Geulincx which destroys all will, can be a satisfactory basis for the renunciatory ideal. That it must have such a basis is true, but that of Schopen-

¹. *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, quoted by Edward Caird, *Literature and Philosophy*, Vol. I, pg. 81.

². Caird, *Essays on Literature and Philosophy*, Vol. I, pg. 81.

³. Shaw, *Value and Dignity of Human Life*, pt. II, sec. 6.

hauer is too abstract and subjective, while that of Geulincx tends to pantheism and the loss of human freedom. Rather must renunciation be grounded in the spiritual dignity of man as a necessity for the subduing of the sense-world in favor of the spiritual life. The world of sense need not lose its value nor be repudiated, as such, but it must bow in submission to the real and higher order which can provide for humanity its own sense of immediacy and a genuine world-hood. Such a grounding of renunciation is best seen in Russian thought and Christianity. Tolstoi, who shares the Russian Sympathism with its consciousness of suffering, makes renunciation fundamental in his ideal of resignation, by which he seeks to build a spiritual life around the center of love to God and an active sympathy for humanity but upon the ruins of self-love and self-seeking. Dostoeffsky uses renunciation to prepare the way for redemption in the Christian sense. The idea of regeneration is paramount in Russian thinking. The sense-world does not offer either home or work sufficient for such a being as man for he never gets so low in the meshes of the world that he is hopeless. Even Gorky, who is very doubtful of man's work in the world, believes that even for his most miserable characters there is hope through regeneration. Here is a pessimism with a positive hope.

Christianity has the distinguishing marks of the "*Contemptus mundi*" and the "*Amor Christi*" but the contempt of the world is not Christianity without the "*Amor Christi*" for without the latter it would be no improvement over the hopeless pessimism of Schopenhauer.¹ Its recognition of the evil, sin, misery and death in the world is as thorough-going as Buddhism. However, it possesses the pessimism of strength in that its "*Contemptus mundi*" is in order that its "*Amor Christi*" may prevail. Furthermore Christianity in positing a spiritual world-order, as the true home and work-field for humanity, meets the demands of man's spiritual ego as we acknowledge it. "For the spiritual life within us al-

¹. Paulsen, *System of Ethics*, bk. I, ch. 2.

ways presents itself as something transcendent and is not coincident with our life."¹ Again Christianity in its idea of redemption, considers the evil in the world not as a mere appearance like the Hindoos, but as a moral guilt, something which has no fundamental relation to the world of nature but rather the warping and misuse of it. Therefore, there remains the hope of a positive life in the midst of nature. This view of the world wins the assent of Eucken who believes that it makes it impossible to affirm or negate the world but rather to take a position where both affirmation and negation are present.²

It is such a view of renunciation as Christianity takes which best satisfies this thesis. The universality and persistence of the ideal finds explanation in the inherent struggle between the sense and spirit always waged, but not always understood, in humanity. The mixture of sense and spirit is such that no clear lines are drawn in the conflict and for this reason renunciation has not always been wisely or properly used. When, however, the ego has realized its own spiritual self-hood and world-hood as posited by religion and especially by Christianity, it has found renunciation an absolute necessity for its own self-affirmation and true activity. The metaphysical basis is thus secure in the spiritual nature of the world and humanity. The moral grounds for our ideal are to be found in the moral guilt of the world. This relieves us of the more inimical character of our ethical ideal but at the same time it reminds us of its necessity and validity. Renunciation refuses to be dismissed from the field of the human problem. There is nothing left but to regard it in its real character and proceed to renounce all that stands in the way of the spiritual order and God, and thus rest in religion; and also to renounce all that stands in the way of the welfare of humanity and rest in ethics. Such a use of renunciation leads to the completeness of life as set before us in Christianity for having attained by the renun-

1. Eucken, *Life's Basis and Life's Ideals*, pt. III, sec. I.
2. Ib., pg. 332.

ciatory pathway the immediacy of the spirit and the world-hood of the self, man has found his home and his work. For this home he surrenders all else and for his work he gives himself, for as Goethe saw, it is cosmic toil. Such a view of renunciation justifies its place in human thinking and only by its employment can man achieve self-hood in a world of sense and enter into that spiritual World-order where the ego is at home and where its work-field lies.

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